



DAM FAILURE

Description

The *failure of dams* due to excessive rainfall, volcanic eruption, poor construction, poor maintenance, or earthquake activity can cause catastrophic floods.

Geographic Considerations

A dam failure could affect everyone living in the floodplain downstream of a man-made dam. There are more than 80,000 dams throughout the United

States; more than 20,000 are classified as posing "high" or "significant" hazards. These designations mean that if such a dam failed, lives could be lost and extensive property damage would be suffered.